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VANCOUVER metro®

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Fifty Shades and Valentine's Day:

The heat is on

PAGES 19 & 27

A SIGN OF WHEEL LOVE

A woman walks past a heart-shaped bicycle rack outside the Vancouver Art Gallery on Thursday. The City of Vancouver has installed six of the romantic bike racks ahead of Valentine's Day. Story, page 4. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

Outings pitched for child killer

Assessment. Allan Schoenborn was found not criminally responsible for killing his three kids, because of a mental disorder

The B.C. man who viciously killed his three children nearly seven years ago still poses significant safety and escape risks, but his psychiatrist says Allan Schoenborn should be granted supervised releases into the community.

Dr. Marcel Hediger has treated Schoenborn for three years and told an annual B.C. Review Board hearing Thursday the 46-year-old has made enough clinical progress to be considered for escorted leaves.

A Crown lawyer at the hearing — held at a psychiatric hospital east of Vancouver — grilled but did not sway Hediger on his rationale.

"You still regard Mr. Schoenborn as posing a significant risk of causing physical or psychological harm, right at this point in time, despite treatment?" asked Wendy Dawson.

"I do, yes," Hediger said.

He later added, "We do take public safety into account.

"I do think the risk currently is different than when he is mentally ill and taking alcohol."

The director of the Forensic Psychiatric Hospital supports the plan.

Dawson asked Hediger, who was defending the assessment made by a team of experts, about the role anger played in the killings.

"That has specifically been a concern and a challenge for myself," Hediger said. "He has consistently denied that anger played a role in the index offence."

Schoenborn stabbed his 10-year-old daughter, Kaitlynne, and smothered his sons, eight-year-old Max and five-year-old Cordon, in their Merritt home in 2008. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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NEWS

Sunshine Coast

Theatre owner refuses to screen 50 Shades of Grey

Owners of a small-town theatre on the Sunshine Coast have thrown a kink into the plans of those bent on seeing Fifty Shades of Grey.

Deborah Proby of the Raven's Cry Theatre in Sechelt, B.C., says in an email she won't show the film.

The decision that's receiving coverage in B.C. media outlets appears to be tied to the movie's 18A rating, which Proby says would have forced her to sell tickets to minors.

She says adults can still find many other ways to see the movie, just not at her theatre. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Downtown Eastside

March aims to honour missing, murdered women

Valentine's Day will mark the 24th annual march to honour missing and murdered women and girls from the Downtown Eastside.

The Women's Memorial March begins at noon at Main and Hastings. Its goal is to honour the memory of those who have died and to reiterate the call for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

"Indigenous women disproportionately continue to go missing or be murdered with minimal to no action to address these tragedies or the systemic nature of gendered violence, poverty, racism or colonialism," the organizing committee stated in a news release. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Vancouver warms up memories of 2010 Olympic Games

The Olympic Cauldron in Coal Harbour was set ablaze Thursday morning to mark the fifth anniversary of the start of the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. For a photo gallery of some of Metro's favourite memories from the Games, visit metronews.ca/vancouver. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Small business association says 'No' to 0.5% tax hike

Plebiscite. Group takes stance against 'Yes' vote in transit funding debate after survey of members

MATT KIELTYKA
matt.kieltyka@metronews.ca

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has taken a stance against a "Yes" vote in the spring plebiscite on transit funding.

Richard Truscott, the association's vice-president, said the stance comes after a survey of 260 members about the proposed 0.5 per cent Congestion Improvement Tax earlier this month.

An overwhelming majority, 80 per cent, of business owners polled said they would vote "No" if the plebiscite was held today, compared to just 17 per cent in favour (three per cent were undecided).

"We're a member-driven organization and small business owners have reached the consensus that the new transit tax isn't the best way forward," said Truscott. "There's got to be a better way to fund transit improvements without putting more of a burden on taxpayers and small business. Our members have a real fear this is a slippery slope."

According to the survey — conducted Feb. 9 to Feb. 12 — 60 per cent of CFIB members want to see transit improvements paid for by existing revenues, a viewpoint fed by the perception that TransLink mismanages the funds it already has at its disposal.

TransLink's board of directors acknowledged the lack of public confidence on Thursday by announcing the removal of Ian Jarvis as its CEO, though he remains with the transit authority as an advisor.

Interim CEO Doug Allen has vowed to hold people to account and extract efficiencies at every level of TransLink.

But that's done little to appease small business owners, according to Truscott.

"TransLink's problems go much deeper than simply replacing the guy at the top," he said. "The 'Yes' side has an uphill battle."

The region's mayors have proposed the 0.5 per cent regional sales tax as a vehicle to pay for its $7.5-billion, 10-year transit plan, which includes a subway line along Broadway in Vancouver, light rapid transit lines in Surrey, a new Pattullo Bridge and region-wide improvements to roads and public transit.

Plebiscite ballots will be mailed to Metro Vancouver residents beginning March 16.

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Death. Border agency still lacks oversight: Advocates

More than a year after a Mexican woman hanged herself in a B.C. immigration detention centre, advocacy groups say the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) still lacks crucial oversight to prevent such deaths.

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) says the agency hasn't yet established an independent body to oversee CBSA actions, one of the key recommendations from a coroner's inquest into the death of Lucia Vega Jimenez.

The woman died in hospital in December 2013, days after security guards found her hanging inside a shower stall in the holding facility below Vancouver International Airport.

The inquest last fall also recommended the CBSA create an above-ground holding centre within a 30-minute drive of the airport, but the BCCLA and other advocacy groups say no action has been taken on the recommendation.

The Canadian Council for Refugees is also critical of the agency's requirements for common washrooms in holding facilities — which it says will threaten the privacy and safety of gay, lesbian and transgender detainees.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Education

UBC residence fees to increase 20%

UBC students living on campus next year will have to fork out an extra $104-$140 a month.

The university's board of governors was supposed to vote on the proposed 20 per cent increase in residence fees Thursday morning, but rather than give it a thumbs up or down, members moved the motion to be included in April's budget.

"In a way, it's what we expected. Things don't go to the board unless they're going to pass," said Anne Kessler with UBC's Alma Mater Society.

TEREZA VERENCA/FOR METRO

City shows love for cycling

Public spaces. Installation of heart-shaped bike racks at popular sites meant to encourage active transportation

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

A heart-shaped bike rack by the Vancouver Art Gallery on Thursday. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

The City of Vancouver is sending a valentine to cyclists in the form of six heart-shaped bike racks.

Designed by local firm Dobra Design, the romantic red racks are being installed in popular public spaces, including the English Bay seawall and beside the Vancouver Art Gallery, to "add delight to the streetscape through street furniture," city communications co-ordinator Amanda McCuaig wrote in an email.

The idea is that if public spaces are more appealing, it will encourage people to use active transportation such as cycling and help the city reach its goal of getting two-thirds of people out of cars by 2040.

The bike racks cost $3,240 ($540 apiece) to build, deliver and install. Typical bike racks cost between $200 and $2,000.

The city hopes people will take photos with the new racks and share them on social media with the hashtag #lovebikeyvr.

Visit metronews.ca for a map of the racks.

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West End coyote returns

Warning. The wild animal has not been aggressive but seems very comfortable near people and their pets

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

A coyote strolls through a West End Vancouver park. ROBYN WORCESTER/CONTRIBUTED

A rough-looking coyote that was spotted throughout the West End last summer is back — and this time it appears to have a mate.

The Stanley Park Ecology Society issued a warning on Thursday about the coyote, which hasn't been aggressive but seems to be a little too comfortable near people and pets even during daylight hours.

The society issued the warning since it's mating season for coyotes and the animals will likely be looking for more food, said Dan Straker, the society's urban wildlife co-ordinator.

Straker asks people not to feed the animals, to keep their small dogs on leashes, to keep their cats inside and to scare the coyotes if they spot them in public spaces.

Feeding coyotes is against the law and bad for the animals' health.

Anyone who spots a coyote is asked to report it online at stanleyparkecology.ca.

New poll. Sports and sex divide B.C. couples

A new poll suggests couples living on the West Coast don't fight about chores or money — but about sports and intimacy.

Marketing-research company Insights West asked British Columbians and Albertans about the issues that cause tension in their relationships.

"When we look at sports, it's not necessarily that they're rooting for different teams, it's more about the information related to sports," says Mario Canseco, vice-president of public affairs.

"Once you get down to it, they disagree on how the Canucks should be playing and they disagree on whether Eddie Lack should be getting more playing time."

Canseco adds that because households usually have two incomes, couples are deciding how the money should be spent together.

"If we go back 30 or 40 years, that wouldn't have been the case," he says.

When it comes to the boudoir, 53 per cent of B.C. respondents are satisfied with frequency and 58 per cent are OK with the variety.

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, more than three-in-five residents of the two provinces deem Feb. 14 as "a waste of time and money."

What's interesting, however, is that British Columbians are more likely to do something for their significant other. Favourite activities include giving a greeting card (26 per cent), going out to dinner (23 per cent) and cooking a special meal (20 per cent).

TEREZA VERENCA/FOR METRO

Quoted

"Once you get down to it, they disagree on how the Canucks should be playing and they disagree on whether Eddie Lack should be getting more playing time."

Mario Canseco, vice-president of public affairs for Insights West, on couples in B.C. and Alberta

Chilliwack

Man dies after RCMP encounter

British Columbia's police watchdog is investigating the death of a Fraser Valley man who was accused of stabbing a dog.

RCMP Insp. Ed Boettcher says Chilliwack Mounties were called to a home late Wednesday afternoon and "engaged" the suspect inside the residence.

He says the suspect allegedly struggled with police before officers used a conducted energy weapon and arrested him.

Boettcher says the man appeared unresponsive, so police performed CPR and called paramedics, who took the suspect to hospital, where he was later pronounced dead.

He says an officer was injured, treated in hospital and released and that the dog was taken to a veterinarian.

Police called the Independent Investigations Office of B.C., which Boettcher said was on the scene late Wednesday night. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Court. Accused B.C. terrorists were former drug addicts, trial hears

A couple accused of plotting an attack at the British Columbia legislature were self-described "heroin junkies" who struggled with money and seemed just as worried about the fate of their cat as they were about finding bomb parts, their trial has heard.

John Nuttall and Amanda Korody are charged with four terrorism-related offences. Their trial has revealed new details about a couple the Crown alleges conspired to kill and maim countless bystanders on Canada Day in the name of radical Islam.

Much of the Crown's case relies on RCMP video and audio recordings, which were collected during an undercover operation that ensnared the husband and wife in March 2013 and ended with their arrest almost four months later.

In a video recorded on June 26 that year, Nuttall explains to an undercover officer that he and Korody are former drug addicts who take methadone. He expresses concern about what would happen if they run out of methadone before Canada Day, which is five days away.

"I just don't want to be liabilities when we run out of that stuff," Nuttall tells the officer, who is posing as an Arab businessman helping Nuttall and Korody execute their plan.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"Before Islam, we were heroin junkies.... I want you to know we have made a real effort to change our lives for the better to serve Allah. It's baby steps, though."

John Nuttall

Nanaimo. Multiple cases of indecent exposure reported

Nanaimo Mounties are investigating three incidents of indecency after three women say they were exposed to men masturbating.

On Feb. 9, a woman was walking in a parkade when a man approached her on foot, said "excuse me" and gestured downward. After noticing his pants were down and that he was touching himself, the female swung her purse at him and missed. She then turned around and walked away.

An hour later, another woman answered a knock at her door and found a man masturbating. Authorities say the suspect's description did not match the person involved in the first incident. Two days later, a woman was walking in a park when she noticed a male standing a few feet away. She heard him say, "Do you want me to masturbate for you?"

RCMP believe the same person is responsible for the first and third incidents. He's described as a white male, in his early 20s with a slim build and strawberry blond hair.

The man suspected in the second incident has red hair, a medium ginger beard, sunken cheeks and looks "very unhealthy." TEREZA VERENCA/METRO

A fisherman prepares fishing nets on the coastline in Lamtutui village on Dec. 25 in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. ULET IFANSASTI/GETTY IMAGES

B.C. experts propose fishing moratorium

International waters. Research suggests a ban on fishing on the high seas would boost coastal catches by 18%, protect fish stocks

MATT KIELTYKA
matt.kieltyka@metronews.ca

A team of British Columbia-led researchers believe banning fishing in international waters would help protect fish stocks and boost coastal economies.

Rashid Sumaila, the director of UBC's Fisheries Economics Research Unit, was the lead author of the study, published Thursday in the journal Scientific Reports.

"Fish do not respect national boundaries and we've learned 42 per cent of species migrate to the high seas," said Sumaila. "The United Nations doesn't have much legal power over international waters and those fisheries are really poorly managed, if at all."

Such practices have severely damages global populations of species such as tuna and swordfish. Researchers found that 10 countries (including South Korea, Taiwan and Japan) capture the bulk (71 per cent) of the world's landed value of catches in international waters. Overfishing in the high seas has a direct impact on fish stocks of nations, like Canada, that rely on fishing within their coastal exclusive economic zones.

Sumaila's research suggests a ban on fishing in international waters would boost coastal catches by 18 per cent and protect fish stocks without limiting global supply.

The nations most involved in high seas fishing would stand to lose at least $800 million US by banning the practice, but Sumaila says that loss could be offset by stronger coastal markets.

Canada, for instance, would see an increase of $125 million per year.

"And that's the most conservative of estimates," said Sumaila. "There would be enough return to compensate and pay off those nations that do (high seas fishing)."

Sumaila says the paper is timely, as the United Nations is currently looking at ways to reform governance of international waters.

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vancouver@metronews.ca

If you have a painting in your home initialed G.T.B. or signed G.T. Brown, it could be worth close to $75,000.

Dr. John Lutz, a history professor at the University of Victoria, is putting a call out to the public, asking them to contact him if they discover one hanging on their wall.

Grafton Tyler Brown was a 19th-century painter, mastering two genres: landscapes and vanity images of people's houses, farms and businesses.

"He was the first black artist in the Pacific Northwest and his paintings were probably sold back then for no more than $350," said Lutz.

His hunt for the Brown originals began accidentally almost three years ago. He was working in the Saanich archives, conducting research on early settlement.

"I came across a painting, a really detailed sketch of one of the local farms. I thought, 'Wow, if there are others like this out there, this will really help in understanding the history,'" he said.

Lutz is confident the "missing" paintings do exist, due to the fact Brown photographed 22 of his pieces, but only three have been archived.

"A newspaper also described another 22 sketches he drew in preparation for the paintings, and only one of those has been located," he added.

Lutz's ultimate goal is to track them down and arrange for an exhibit, either in Vancouver or Victoria.

While African American by birth, Brown was known as a "white" artist by the time he moved to Victoria in 1882.

"From the time he was a porter at the age of 17, described as 'coloured' in the directories, to the time he was 24 when that label was removed and he owned a print shop, Brown is a lesson to us today about race, reminding us that race is a social construction."

If you think you have an original piece, email jlutz@uvic.ca.

A scene of Shuswap Lake, painted by Grafton Tyler Brown in 1882. This is one of the "missing" pieces. CONTRIBUTED

Child porn charges dropped after lengthy trial delay

Child pornography charges have been stayed against a B.C. man because it took too long for the case to get to trial, a provincial court judge has ruled.

Alan Raymond Charbonneau of Quesnel was charged in 2009 with possessing child pornography and accessing child pornography between Jan. 1, 2006, and March 24, 2009.

Charbonneau, 62, a longtime Quesnel resident who had no criminal record, had worked for 22 years as a conservation officer in B.C. until medical problems affected his ability to perform his duties. He then worked for Fisheries and Oceans Canada from July 2001 until January 2010.

He took early retirement when his integrity was questioned at work after being charged with two child porn counts.

Near the end of his 14-day trial in December 2013, Charbonneau filed a constitutional challenge, alleging that his right to a trial within a reasonable time under the Charter had been violated and he should be granted a judicial stay of proceedings as a remedy.

Charbonneau argued that his right to a speedy trial was prejudiced by the fact he waited 54 months until the end of trial, which exhausted all his savings and prevented him from seeking employment, and the stress of the drawn-out case caused him high blood pressure, depression, hopelessness and anxiety.

The delay hearing was told that due to the sheer volume of child pornography investigations and the time required to complete a detailed analysis of computer images, RCMP policy says that a detailed analysis not be done until the trial date has been set.

The Crown did not disclose the material to the defence until Nov. 22, 2010, which resulted in the defence asking for the trial to be adjourned until May 2011, which was granted because of late disclosure by the Crown.

But the second trial date didn't proceed because the accused was then recovering from orthopedic surgery. A new trial date was set for October 2011, but that didn't proceed because the defence lawyer became ill.

The trial started Feb. 29, 2012, but it took 21 months for the evidence to be heard in stages, with the final arguments on trial heard in August 2014

While noting the charges were serious, the judge concluded a 54-month trial delay was prejudicial to the accused and granted a judicial stay of proceedings.

NEAL HALL/METRO

Detailed analysis

An RCMP officer examined 23,644 images on Charbonneau's computer and determined 363 were child pornography. As well, 52 videos contained child pornography, the court noted.

Provincial politics

New Democrats vow to change electoral system

British Columbia's New Democrats are pledging to change the provincial electoral system.

But New Democrat member Gary Holman says the party's plan comes with a catch: getting elected in 2017. The NDP has lost the last four consecutive elections to the B.C. Liberals, dating back to 2001.

Holman, who speaks on issues of democratic reform for the party, says if the NDP does win in 2017, British Columbians will vote to decide if they want a proportional representation voting system in place for the 2021 provincial election. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Animal cruelty

B.C. man who beat dog at drive-thru window avoids jail

A Kamloops man who admitted to beating and choking his dog while picking up an order at a drive-thru has avoided jail, but won't be allowed to own a pet for two years.

Robert Sedore, 46, pleaded guilty in provincial court to wilfully causing unnecessary pain to an animal.

His lawyer, Jay Michi, said Sedore, who has a lengthy criminal history dating back 30 years, is enrolled at Thompson Rivers University and is headed in the right direction.

"It was wrong what I did, and I regret it," Sedore told court. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Murder charge

Lawyer awaits police account of Mountie shooting

A lawyer for a man accused of shooting a Mountie during a traffic stop in Kamloops says he is still waiting for information from the Crown.

Thirty-six-year-old Ken Knutson has made a video appearance in provincial court after being arrested in connection with the shooting of RCMP Cpl. Jean-Rene Michaud.

Defence lawyer Alexander Watt says he needs the police account of what happened before Michaud was shot last December.

Michaud is still recovering in hospital.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian-Egyptian Al Jazeera journalist Mohamed Fahmy, left, arrives at court in Cairo for his retrial on Thursday. Fahmy and a colleague were ordered released on bail pending their retrial. GETTY IMAGES

Canadian journalist released from prison

Egypt. Mohamed Fahmy has left a Cairo prison after a judge ordered him released on bail pending retrial

Canadian journalist Mohamed Fahmy has left a prison in Cairo hours after an Egyptian court ordered him released on bail.

Both his brother, Adel Fahmy, and Al Jazeera English confirmed the news via Twitter late Thursday that Fahmy had been released.

The surprise development prompted expressions of jubilation from Mohamed Fahmy's family, although the 40-year-old's legal battles aren't quite over yet.

The retrial was put over to Feb. 23, and until then, lawyers said Fahmy and an Egyptian co-worker will have to report to a local police station every day.

Fahmy has spent more than a year in a Cairo prison on terror-related charges. He and colleague Baher Mohamed both face terror-related charges that their families have called ridiculous.

One of their colleagues — Australian Peter Greste — was freed last Sunday under new legislation that lets Egypt's president deport foreigners convicted or accused of crimes.

"We're extremely happy because it's unbelievable to have your brother back after 14 months, especially with such injustice and all the pain he's endured," Fahmy's brother, Adel Fahmy, told The Canadian Press earlier Thursday.

"We still want full exoneration, if not, then deportation, and we still want Canada to pressure hard, but it was a step in the right direction."

Fahmy's family has been urging the Canadian government to push Egypt for the journalist's release.

They noted that bail was also granted to 11 other defendants caught up in the same case, who are mostly students accused of being involved with Egypt's banned Islamist Muslim Brotherhood group. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"We still feel that the Canadian government is not applying the sufficient pressure."

Adel Fahmy, Mohamed Fahmy's brother

Iraq. Canadian troops in fourth firefight with ISIL

Canadian troops were recently involved in another exchange of fire with extremists in northern Iraq, a skirmish that comes as the U.S. prepares to expand the scope of its special forces missions throughout the region.

A draft resolution before the U.S. Congress would, if passed, authorize "ground combat operations in limited circumstances" and special forces missions targeting leaders of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

That will put pressure on the Harper government as it prepares to renew Canada's commitment to the combat mission against ISIL, defence experts said Thursday.

Capt. Paul Forget, a spokesman for the country's joint operations command, refused to provide details on the latest episode, citing operational security. But Forget did say it was similar to three previous gun battles in which Canadian troops returned fire while visiting the front line during a planning exercise. There were no Canadian casualties, he said.

Since early February, Canada's CF-18s have conducted 14 airstrikes in support of Iraqi troops, but Forget could not say whether Canadian special forces had facilitated any of those bombing missions. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Citizenship ceremonies

Harper vows to fight court order lifting veil ban

Vowing to appeal a federal court decision that allows citizenship candidates to wear face coverings at swearing-in ceremonies, Prime Minister Stephen Harper says it's "offensive" that someone would want to hide their identity "at the very moment where they are committing to join the Canadian family." In a ruling last Friday, the Federal Court of Canada said it is "unlawful" to mandate new citizens to remove the veil while taking the oath. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Pearson's media tea party backfired

Lester B. Pearson was so delighted by his pick for a potential new Canadian flag that the Liberal prime minister summoned some journalists to 24 Sussex Drive in the summer of 1964 to show it off.

About a dozen reporters were invited to enjoy a cup of tea with Pearson at 24 Sussex in July '64 and watch him unfurl his choice for the new flag, dubbed the Pearson Pennant.

As the reporters left, however, Pearson told them any stories about his pick for the design would have to be attributed to a "reliable source."

This flag design was Lester B. Pearson's favourite. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Star Weekly reporter Walter Stewart, a relative newcomer to the press gallery, balked, uncomfortable with the idea of writing a positive story about Pearson's flag design without naming the source.

He subsequently identified Pearson as the source, infuriating the prime minister to such an extent that instructions were issued to staff to deny Stewart any information in the future. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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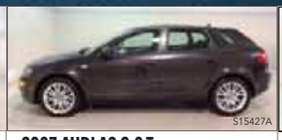

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A Canadian flag flies in the wind at Granville Island in Vancouver, B.C. Sunday marks 50 years since the now-beloved Maple Leaf flag was adopted.
DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Flag caused bitter battle

50th birthday. Canada prepares to celebrate now-beloved Maple Leaf flag this Sunday

When Lester B. Pearson unveiled his top pick for a new Canadian flag at a Winnipeg legion hall in July 1964, he was met with boos, hisses and heckling from veterans who accused him of selling out Canada to the "pea soupers."

The Liberal prime minister had campaigned a year earlier on replacing the Red Ensign — the country's unofficial flag that paired Canada's coat of arms and the Union Jack — with a uniquely Canadian emblem as the 1967 centennial approached.

As Canada prepares to celebrate its now-beloved flag's 50th birthday on Sunday, the national brawl that erupted as Pearson forged ahead with his plans is a distant memory.

Conservative Sen. Marjory LeBreton, who worked in opposition leader John Diefenbaker's office, said in a recent interview that Canada's military veterans had fought under the Red Ensign in two world wars — one of which had only ended 20 years earlier.

Nonetheless, young Canadians argued with their parents about the need for a new flag; one would-be designer even submitted a flag proposal festooned with John, Paul, George and Ringo as Beatlemania gripped North America.

Some English-Canadians, meantime, accused French-Canadians — the aforementioned "pea soupers" — of being behind the push to cut Canada's ties to Great Britain even as one Quebec MP, Pierre Trudeau, sniffed that Quebecers didn't give a "tinker's damn" about a new flag.

Just a few months after Pearson's PR disaster in Winnipeg, however, he managed to convince a majority of parliamentarians — including Conservatives — to vote in favour of the red Maple Leaf chosen by his flag selection committee as the new official emblem.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

How to handle a flag

While there are no laws dictating how to fly or use the Canadian flag, protocols have developed over the years. Here are some guidelines about the Maple Leaf from Canadian Heritage:

1. The flag should "be displayed only in a manner befitting this important national symbol; it should not be subjected to indignity or displayed in a position inferior to any other flag."

2. It should not be used as a table cloth or seat cover.

3. The flag should not touch the ground.

4. "When the national flag of Canada is raised or lowered, or when it is carried past in a parade or review, all present should face the flag."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

New peace deal set for Ukraine

Negotiations.
Ceasefire effective starting 5 p.m. EST Saturday with special status for rebel regions

Guns will fall silent, heavy weapons will pull back from the front, and Ukraine will trade a broad autonomy for the east for control of the Russian border by the end of the year under a peace deal hammered out Thursday in all-night negotiations between Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany.

The deal was full of potential pitfalls, however, that could derail its implementation. In announcing the plan, Russia and Ukraine disagreed over what exactly they had agreed to in marathon 16-hour talks, including the status of a key town under rebel siege.

Russian President Vladimir Putin told reporters that the agreement envisages a cease-fire that will be effective starting from the start of the day Sunday (5 p.m. EST Saturday) as well as a special status for the rebel regions, provisions on border controls and humanitarian issues.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said there was no agreement on any autonomy for eastern Ukraine, a longtime demand of Russia that wants it to maintain leverage over its neighbour and prevent it from joining NATO.

However, the deal requires Ukrainian parliament to give wide powers to the eastern regions as a condition for restoring Ukraine's full control over the border — a provision certain to trigger heated political debate in Ukraine. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Women mourn deaths of 3 shot over parking spaces

Female mourners gather for the funerals of Deah Shaddy Barakat, 23; his 21-year-old wife of less than two months, Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha; and her 19-year-old sister, Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha, at the Method Road Soccer Complex Thursday, on the North Carolina State campus in Raleigh, N.C. The three were shot to death Tuesday, in what police described as a long-standing argument over parking spaces at the condominium complex where Barakat had lived for more than a year. COREY LOWENSTEIN/THE NEWS & OBSERVER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S.

Republicans vow to toughen Obama's request

U.S. congressional Republicans vowed Thursday to toughen President Barack Obama's day-old legislation to authorize military force against fighters from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, as House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi warned, "It's going to be hard" to find common ground. Nothing underscored the yawning divide between the two parties more than Obama's request to bar "enduring offensive combat operations" from the struggle against terrorists who have seized territory in Syria and Iraq and beheaded hostages. The Republican leader of the House, Speaker John Boehner, said disapprovingly that Obama's proposal would "tie his hands even further" than current law. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ecology

Oceans full of plastic from landfills

Around eight million metric tonnes of shopping bags, bottles, food wrappers, toys and other plastic waste drifted into the world's oceans in a single year, says a new study that warns the amount could double over the next decade.

The unique research, published Thursday in the journal Science, suggests that between 4.8 million and 12.7 million metric tonnes of plastic entered the oceans in 2010 from people living within 50 kilometres of coastlines in 192 countries.

In the same year, those countries generated a total of 275 million metric tons of plastic waste, with much of it coming from mismanaged landfills and litter. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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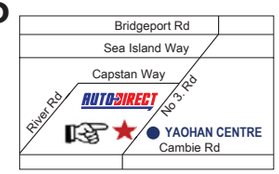

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An unidentified Chinese family member of a passenger on board the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 protests outside the Malaysia Airlines office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on Thursday. JOSHUA PAUL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Relatives protest over missing plane

Flight MH370. Officials in Kuala Lumpur say declaration lost plane was an accident was intended to allow families to move on

Chinese relatives of passengers on a missing Malaysia Airlines flight protested Thursday outside the carrier's office, urging Malaysia to rescind a declaration that all on board have perished.

Flight 370, which disappeared last March 8 while flying from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, is believed to have crashed in the southern Indian Ocean off Australia. A search is ongoing but no confirmed debris has been found.

Malaysia's government on Jan. 29 formally declared the plane an accident and said all 239 people on board were presumed dead, paving the way for compensation claims. It upset victims' families, who are still waiting for evidence of the plane's fate.

Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai assured the relatives that the international search will continue.

Fifteen Chinese relatives of passengers arrived Wednesday in Malaysia to demand answers, and more are expected to arrive before the Lunar New Year. Most of the passengers were from China.

Wearing red T-shirts with the words "Pray for MH370," they held posters outside the airline's office reading, "Who can tell us what happened?" THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"I cannot accept it. Where is the debris? Where are the bodies? Nothing is found, why declare it an accident?"

Wang Rung Xiang, 58. Her only son, Hou Bo, 35, was on the plane.

EU. Leaders debate anti-terror moves

Galvanized by the recent terror attacks in France, European Union leaders on Thursday debated a range of ambitious steps to better protect their 28 nations, including exchanging airliner passenger manifests, tightening controls at the border and combating extremism on the Internet.

On Wednesday, European Parliament members, by a 532-136 vote, pledged to work toward getting a passenger name record program enacted by the end of 2015. An earlier attempt died in 2013 when a committee rejected it on civil liberty grounds.

Gilles De Kerchove, the EU's counter-terrorism chief, has called for the swift implementation of a new screening system to detect suspicious travel movements, and suggested it is also time to change some of the rules governing the "Schengen area," where 26 European countries, among them 22 EU nations, have abolished passport and customs controls among one another. The EU leaders were expected to consider better co-ordination among existing institutions like Europol, Eurojust and the bloc's counter-terrorism co-ordinator. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris attacks

ISIL interviews wanted widow

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant published what it described as an interview with the widow of the French gunman who attacked a kosher supermarket and a police officer in Paris last month, claiming for the first time that she was among extremist fighters. The text interviews did not directly name Hayat Boumeddiene or show images of her,.

Argentina

Ex-wife criticizes prosecutor's death investigation

The ex-wife of the prosecutor whose mysterious death has rocked Argentina criticized the investigation Thursday, calling for an international commission to take up the case and accusing the lead investigator Viviana Fein of releasing too much information.

Sandra Arroyo Salgado said she had asked the Public Defender's Office to bring the death of former husband Alberto Nisman to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The prosecutor was found with a bullet in his head in his bathroom on Jan. 18, the day before he was to elaborate to Congress on his allegation that President Cristina Fernandez had brokered a secret deal with Iran to help shield Iranian officials charged in the 1994 attack on a Jewish community centre that killed 85 people. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Same-sex marriages

U.S. county told to issue licenses

The federal judge who overturned Alabama's gay marriage ban ordered a defiant county to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples, signalling to judges across the state that they should do the same. U.S. District Judge Callie Granade directed Mobile County to begin issuing the licenses, saying a judge there had no reason to deny them after she ruled Alabama's ban on gay marriage was unconstitutional. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

California

Bill Cosby puts off another show

Bill Cosby has postponed a comedy performance in Bakersfield, Calif., amid allegations of sexual abuse of women.

The 77-year-old Cosby has cancelled or postponed more than a dozen shows on his comedy tour in the wake of allegations by numerous women that they were sexually abused by the actor-comedian. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police officer charged with murder in Colorado small town shooting

Rocky Ford. James Ashby first Colorado police officer to face charges for an on-duty shooting in 20 years

Many in Rocky Ford, a small town on Colorado's southeastern plains, wave at police driving by and sometimes stop to give officers crime tips. People under arrest are also neighbours an officer could run into later in the grocery store, so Chief Frank Gallegos encourages his eight-person force to treat suspects with respect.

So when a police officer on the job for five months stopped a 27-year-old resident skateboarding along the main drag, followed him to his home and shot him dead last fall, Rocky Ford's residents were shocked and angry.

People marched, demanding justice for Jack Jacquez — though police are quick to point out that there were no arrests or property damage like that seen in Ferguson, Mo. after the shooting death there of Michael Brown.

What happened next also differed from Ferguson and many other communities that have had recent police shootings: Officer James Ashby was charged with second-degree, non-premeditated murder after an investigation led by law enforcement from surrounding communities and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation.

The outsourcing of the investigation and initial sealing of court documents upset many. But last month, when a judge ruled there was enough evidence for Ashby to stand trial, the investigators' findings became public and confirmed an early claim by Jack Jacquez's mother, Viola, that her son was shot in the back on Oct. 12 as she watched in their kitchen.

Ashby told investigators that Jacquez mouthed off to him when he stopped him skateboarding on U.S. Highway 50. Ashby said he thought Jacquez was trying to burglarize what turned out to be his own home because he walked erratically before heading toward the home's back entrance. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jackie Jacquez-Lindenmuth and her mother, Viola, look over a memorial to her brother Jack Jacquez, who died after being shot by Rocky Ford, Colo., police officer James Ashby last year. SOLOMON BANDA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Race relations

U.S. at crossroads, FBI boss says

The United States is at a crossroads on matters of race relations and law enforcement, presenting "hard truths" that its citizens and police must confront, FBI Director James Comey said Thursday.

One of the issues is that police officers who work in neighbourhoods where most street crime is committed by young black men may hold unconscious biases. But another truth is that minorities in poor neighbourhoods too often inherit a "legacy of crime and prison," a cycle he said must be broken.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Sales in decline: Kellogg's

Kellogg's Special K cereal boxes are displayed on a grocery store shelf in Omaha, Neb. The cereal brand can't shake its outdated image among weight watchers — Kellogg's said Thursday its U.S. cereal unit suffered another sales decline in its last quarter, hurt by the performance of its top moneymaker. CEO John Bryant said people are no longer focused on holding back calories and want foods that make them feel good.

NATI HARNIK, FILE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Media

Sun News to shut down permanently

The Sun News Network will be going off the air on Friday morning, according to several media reports. There are about 200 people who work at Sun News, according to CBC, which first reported the story.

Representatives of the Sun News Network and Quebecor could not be reached for comment.

The controversial television channel was not included in the $316-million deal that saw 175 Sun Media English-language newspapers sold from Quebecor to Postmedia in October 2014.

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Facebook to let users pick 'legacy contact'

Social media. With hundreds of thousands making memorial requests for deceased loved ones, company's latest move gives users more choice

The world's biggest online social network said Thursday that it will now let users pick someone who can manage their accounts after they die. Previously, the accounts were "memorialized" after death, or locked so that no one could log in.

But Facebook says its users wanted more choice. Beginning in the U.S., Facebook users can now pick a "legacy contact" to post on their pages after they die, respond to new friend requests and update their profile picture and cover photo. Users can also have their accounts deleted after their death, which was not possible before.

If users want someone to manage their account after they die, they click on the upside-down triangle on the top right corner of their page and find "security settings."

For U.S. users, there will be an option to edit your legacy contact, who must be a Facebook user.

Users can also check a box to permanently delete your account when they die.

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VOICES

DON'T WORRY, COUPLES HAVE LAME VALENTINE'S DAYS, TOO

THE KOHLER REPORT
By Rebecca Kohler

Are you going to be alone for Valentine's Day? Stop crying! You have options. One avenue is to book yourself a ticket to Portland, Ore., like, right now, and get yourself to Cuddle Con: The Cuddle Convention! The other is to count your blessings for being single and avoiding what will probably be a disappointment for 75 per cent of the coupled population. Those couples will receive stale chocolates or sit through awkward conversationless dinners for two — if they actually do anything at all.

First let's talk about this cuddling convention. Held at the Bossanova Ballroom in Portland, and costing $25 a ticket, Cuddle Con is a 12-hour event featuring a vast array of cuddle-related activities: Consent 101, "a crash course on Cuddle Con's culture of consent," Poetry For Passion Competition, dance classes, AcroYoga lessons and, finally, a 2.5-hour group snuggle that will be followed by a Valentine's Day Dance. Maybe you can dance with your co-cuddler? Sound fun?

Okay, you're still crying. Maybe the idea of paying someone to cuddle you is depressing. Or maybe cuddling with a stranger comes with an ick factor (it does for me: I'm a germophobe and it's measles season)! But the good news is that Cuddle Con's very existence is proof you are not alone in being alone. In fact, cuddling companies have been popping up all over the place — there's one in Vancouver, Montreal and rumour has it, others are on their way to Toronto and Edmonton.

People don't open businesses to sell things that other people don't need. Is there a store, for instance, that sells a kick in the teeth? No. People need hugs, so you are not alone.

It's not surprising that Cuddle-Con is on V-Day, as that's a day when a lot of people become uncomfortably aware that they have no one to hug. But if you're feeling "uncomfortably aware" of anything, again, I promise you, you're not alone.

Valentine's Day puts a spotlight on everyone's love life. Sure, it makes a single person wonder things like, "Why am I alone? Is something wrong with me? Who will fix my sink?" etc. But the spotlight doesn't discriminate. Try being in a mediocre relationship on the 14th. It's like this giant pale, sickly heart comes into your house to remind you it's dying.

It wasn't until my early 20s that I finally had a boyfriend on the big day. I was so excited. I pictured one of those heart-shaped boxes of chocolate and a card that said things like "I love you." Instead, my boyfriend showed up an hour late with a wilted rose and proceeded to complain for the rest of the night about how expensive it was,

Don't be jealous

My boyfriend showed up an hour late with a wilted rose and proceeded to complain for the rest of the night about how expensive it was.

"Ten bucks for a rose? WTF?"

I don't think I've ever received a Valentine's Day present that really hit the love spot. I once received an egg poacher (?). I had mixed feelings upon being gifted a cigarette case; I mean, yeah, I smoked at the time, so I guess it was thoughtful but it kind of felt like, "Here's a cigarette case. I love you, but I also hope you die one day."

I think the day died for me in 2010. I was leaving for an overnight trip on the morning of February 14th and my boyfriend gave me a card and said, "Don't open it until you're on the train." I took this to mean it was meaty, or at least that I'd enjoy it.

So I waited diligently and as the train pulled out of the station, I opened the card and all it said was, "I hope you have a nice day." Wow. No "love." No "so glad I met you." Not even an "xo." I proceeded to have the worst day.

To my surprise that man was not super-committed to like, our relationship, and I spent Valentine's Day fixing and re-fixing my tear-smudged makeup.

I have a pretty nice boyfriend now. We both think V-Day is kind of dumb, and Valentine's Day is easier now that we keep expectations low. We'll probably just exchange cards and luckily, this one knows how to write more than one sentence. Will we cuddle? Maybe a little. But we might also get into a fight about who left the space heater on overnight and spend the rest of the day being passive aggressive with each other because that's what relationships are all about. That and love.

If you're single and you go to Cuddle Con, you might get more hugs than me on the 14th. If you don't, you might stay in, under a blanket, eating delicious snacks, binge-watching your favourite show on Netflix. That would be a way nicer day than my Valentine's 2009. Trust me. |

Rebecca Kohler is a stand-up comic, writer, actor, gymnast, lawyer and chemist. (Some of this isn't true.) Follow her on Twitter at @becca_kohler

Happy face/Sad face

From Jon Stewart's departure to Kanye West's outburst, Metro weighs in on the news that made headlines this week:

SAY IT AIN'T SO

Fans of late-night news satire, still mourning the recent end of The Colbert Report, are reeling this week from the announcement that Jon Stewart will be leaving The Daily Show. The comedy legend has been hosting the show — and putting Fox News pundits in their place — for 16 years.

MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T PLAY POKER WITH YOUR DOG

File under pet owners already know this: A new study says that dogs are able to tell the difference between happy and angry human facial expressions. Various breeds were trained to touch either a happy face or a sad face for a treat.

A GHASTLY MISTAKE

A Romanian diplomat's secret spreadsheet describing guests at an upcoming dinner party as "undesirable" and "ghastly," was accidentally mailed out with the invitations. Recognizing that no amount of diplomacy was going to fix this one, the Foreign Ministry fired him.

HEARTBEATS

Just in time for Valentines Day, researchers at Simon Fraser University say they've created beating heart cells made from skin and blood tissue. The researchers hope the discovery could eventually be used to replace dead or damaged heart tissue in heart attack patients.

OH YEEZUS...

Hey, Kanye, I'm-a say something. Yes, the Grammys, much like other social institutions, have institutionalized racism. Yes, when white hip-hop artists who are literally pale imitations of their more talented black counterparts are heralded as the best the genre has to offer, racism probably has something to do with it. But your fight is not with Beck, who, much like yourself and Beyoncé, is very skilled. Much respect to all the musical artists out there doing their thing.

metro

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Kaohsiung is located in the southern western part of Taiwan. A municipality known for their advance agricultural traditions and quality produce. With plentiful sunshine, rainfall and unique soil conditions, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, has ideal conditions for agricultural competitiveness. They are able to produce high nutritional premium products with minimal damage to the environment while preserving the natural integrity of the produce and its farming traditions.

Confident in their agricultural selection, the city government of Kaohsiung initiated the 'Best of Kaohsiung' certification in 2011, launching a worldwide campaign traveling to Busan, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Shanghai, and Singapore to great reception.

'Best of Kaohsiung' is a government regulated branding issued only to farmers who passed 4 international certifications: Taiwan Agricultural and Food Traceability System (TAFT), Good Agricultural Practice (GAP), Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), and International standards food safety management (ISO22000).

The farmers' also follow cutting edge technology utilizing research from government research facilities and top university labs, while preserving traditional methods of crop tending, bringing forth internationally acclaimed produce that is ethically produced. Look for the special Best of Kaohsiung logo to insure you are getting premium quality certified produce all around the world.

Chinese New Year is the largest most celebrated festivity in Asia. Chinese New Year celebration has been gaining momentum locally, being embraced by local neighborhoods and retailers.

Best of Kaohsiung fruits and their auspicious meanings:

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Emerald Jujubes	Welcomes Early Successes
Dragon Star Fruits	Budding fortunes to come
Honey Bell Wax Apples	Rich Blessings Year after Year

One of the most traditional Chinese New Year gifts and offerings is an auspicious fruit basket. Fruit baskets are often given in lieu of wrapped gifts as a show for continual good health for the coming year. Making a play on the words of each fruit, a basket is filled to symbolize different well wishes.

Selected IGA Marketplace and Fresh St Market locations has brought in specially selected 'Best of Kaohsiung' produce. Whether it is to be given away in a well wished gift basket, or to be eaten individually as a wish for the coming year, the freshly flown in premium exotic produce is here just in time for Chinese New Year. Now is the perfect time to say, from farmers to Kaohsiung, from us to you: Have a Wonderful Happy Chinese New Year.

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The danger of super-sexy roles

Analysis. Landing the lead in 50 Shades of Grey could make or break the career of Dakota Johnson — just ask Elizabeth Berkley

Dakota Johnson and Jamie Dornan star in 50 Shades of Grey. CONTRIBUTED

Jennifer Lawrence once showed me a cellphone snap of herself dressed in a fierce black leather outfit.

She was hot off the success of her Oscar-nominated work in Winter's Bone and used the photo as part of her audition for a role that every actress of a certain age in Hollywood clamoured for in 2010.

She didn't get the part of Lisbeth Salander, the pierced and inked computer hacker star of David Fincher's remake of The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo — the producers thought she was too tall.

In the end, Rooney Mara got it, but not before auditioning five times and beating out better-known hopefuls like Natalie Portman, Scarlett Johansson and Anne Hathaway.

Girl with the Dragon Tattoo was 2011's big literary adaptation, ripe with star-making possibilities and lucrative franchise potential. It didn't pan out that way, but Hollywood hasn't given up on bringing bestsellers to the screen.

This week there are high hopes for Fifty Shades of Grey. Calling the story of college graduate Anastasia Steele and BDSM enthusiast Christian Grey a "literary" adaptation might be a stretch, but with 100 million books sold (including parts two and three) there are great expectations.

So, actors should be crawling over one another to star in the film, right? Think again. Unlike Dragon Tattoo, young Hollywood ingenues have not been whipping themselves into a frenzy over Fifty Shades.

Shailene Woodley had no qualms about performing the film's explicit bondage scenes, but was already tied up making the Divergent movies.

Emma Watson did have qualms. "Who here actually thinks I would do Fifty Shades of Grey as a movie?" she wrote on Twitter.

In the end, Dakota Johnson, better known as the daughter of Don Johnson and Melanie Griffith than for her work on the cancelled sitcom Ben and Kate, won the role.

While it might make her a star, there are dangers involved with a project like this. Just ask Elizabeth Berkley.

Berkley was a wholesome teen model and star of the sitcom Saved by the Bell when a role in Paul Verhoeven's 1995 sexploitation flick Showgirls left her career in tatters.

As the untested star who bared her soul and body in a big-budget film, she took the hit for the film's failure.

Almost 20 years later, she was still emotional about the backlash she suffered. After performing an erotic dance on Dancing with the Stars, she tearfully said, "it reconnected me to when I was just a young woman and took a risk creatively and did Showgirls. With that came a lot of doors being slammed in my face."

Will Johnson be the next Berkley?

According to the ticket-selling site Fandango Fifty, Shades of Grey is the fastest selling R-rated title ever, so Dakota may yet be spared a tearful breakdown in Dancing with the Stars in 2035.

In Focus

RICHARD CROUSE

Richard's ratings

50 Shades of Grey

Kingsman: The Secret Service

The Last Five Years

What We Do In The Shadows

SCENE

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‘He’s the nicest serial killer you’ll ever meet’

Film. Dark comedy sees Ryan Reynolds walk fine line between eerie and endearing

MATT PRIGGE
Metro in New York City

Ryan Reynolds says he attempted to create a three-dimensional character on the set of The Voices, rather than simply portraying a menacing, scary psychopath. HANDOUT

If you’re asking, Ryan Reynolds is a dog person. “But I’m only a dog person because they can be controlled,” he tells us. “Cats hate me.”

That’s a light way to start talking about his new film, The Voices, in which he plays Jerry, a disturbed Midwesterner who’s off his meds, and as such, converses with his dog and his cat (both voiced by him). Soon enough, and purely by accident, he’s racked up a body count. Combining dark comedy with horror and a serious side is a challenge both for him and his director, Marjane Satrapi, who herself is changing gears from the Iran-set Persepolis and Chicken with Plums to stake a bloody American debut.

You had to chase this one down and talk with Satrapi about casting you. How did you convince her?
I knew there were two other actors who had their hands up for it, who I would argue are much more critically acclaimed than I am. So I really had to get my s— together. I met with Marjane and gave her my take on the guy. One of the things I said was: If there’s even one look of menace on Jerry’s face, we lose the audience. She seemed to really latch onto that idea, that we have to trust him, we have to follow him and ostensibly care for him. Somehow she, I don’t know, found me creepy enough to do the role.

What do you think she brings to this project that other directors might not have?
She brings a European sensibility, even though she does not originate from Europe. And she brings a sense of unending whimsy to a subject matter that is a little intense. As I’ve gotten older — I wish I’d learned this earlier — but films are all about the director. It’s their medium.

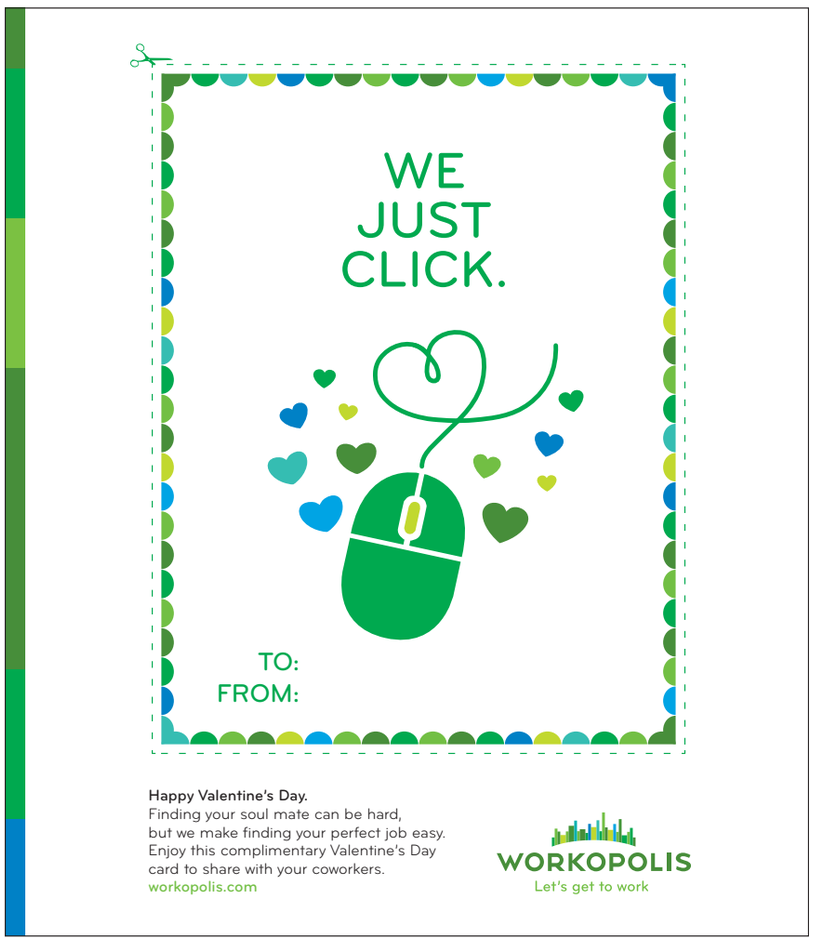
There’s something shockingly sweet-natured about the film. For one thing, the actual gore tends to be off-screen or obscured in the shots.
That’s funny — some people find it gory. I think it’s offset by Jerry’s innocence and arrested development. He was traumatized at 10 or 11 years old, and he’s still 10 or 11 years old when we meet him. It’s also offset by the fact that there’s this asexuality to him. That’s important, especially since we’re dealing with women in this movie. If there was a sexual component, the movie would be wholly unpleasant in every way shape or form, and it would never see the light of day. He’s the nicest serial killer you’ll ever meet.

Jerry’s definitely not a sexual predator.
Marjane did certain things, like when Anna Kendrick’s character (a co-worker with a crush on him) kisses Jerry. Anna’s tiny and I’m not, and she had us do it near a staircase, so she could have Anna up high, so she’d be in control. She pulls Jerry in for a kiss instead of Jerry coming to her.

It’s hard to classify how you portray Jerry: The film is semi-realistic but at the same there’s a heightened, comedic quality to it.
But you can’t think of it like that on-set. I was trying to create someone who is three-dimensional and not this menacing, scary psychopath, because that’s not what he is at all. For me it just brings out those ideas about heroes and villains. They’re given such a raw deal, villains, in movies, because they’re always twisting some kind of mustache, figuratively. No villain on earth does that. They don’t have a compulsion for evil; what they have is an opposing conviction that you don’t agree with. That’s interesting to me. I wanted to bring as much empathy to Jerry as possible. But he’s a villain, to some degree. He’s the guy you read about in the news and say, “Glad I didn’t run into that freak.” At the same time, we read those things in the news and there’s a narrative we fill in our own minds. We get to show who that guy is.

Just do it

“One of the things Marjane and I clicked over was neither of us likes to rehearse. That was nice. Because I always think, just go be it. If I’m a good enough actor I can show up to set ready. We clicked on this ‘f— rehearsal’ thing. We just dove right in. I remember on Buried I was asked to rehearse for two weeks. I just said, “On what? Lying down on a coffee table in a room? Can we just shoot the f—ing thing? I don’t want to pretend I’m in a coffin, doing some Marcel Marceau bit. Let’s just go!”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Ratings: *Certified Fresh:* *Fresh:* *Rotten:* *Audience response:* *Audience anticipation for the film:* +

Mystery & Suspense

Kingsman: The Secret Service

Director. Matthew Vaughn

Stars. Colin Firth, Michael Caine

Based upon the acclaimed comic book and directed by Matthew Vaughn (Kick Ass, X-Men First Class), Kingsman: The Secret Service tells the story of a super-secret spy organization that recruits an unrefined but promising street kid into the agency's ultra-competitive training program just as a global threat emerges from a twisted tech genius.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 77% **Audience:** 88%

Romance

Fifty Shades of Grey

Director. Sam Taylor-Johnson

Stars. Jamie Dornan, Dakota Johnson

E.L. James' kinky bestseller gets the big-screen treatment with this Universal Pictures/Focus Features co-production. The steamy tale details a masochistic relationship between a college student and a businessman, whose desires for extreme intimacy stem from secrets in his past.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 42% **Audience:** + 87%

Drama/Comedy

What We Do In The Shadows

Director. Taika Waititi, Jemaine Clement

Stars. Taika Waititi, Jemaine Clement

What We Do In The Shadows chronicles the adventures of four vampire roommates trying to get by in a modern world that's not always hospitable to the undead. Clement and Waititi, creators of the HBO hit series Flight of the Conchords, co-wrote, co-directed, and co-star in this hilarious send-up.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 92% **Audience:** + 91%

Drama

The Duke of Burgundy

Director. Peter Strickland

Stars. Chiara D'Anna, Sidse Babett Knudsen

Day after day, Cynthia (Sidse Babett Knudsen) and Evelyn (Chiara D'Anna) act out a simple yet provocative ritual that ends with Evelyn's punishment and pleasure. As Cynthia yearns for a more conventional relationship, Evelyn's obsession with erotica quickly becomes an addiction.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 93% **Audience:** 77%

Comedy

Jupiter Ascending

Director. Andy Wachowski, Lana Wachowski

Stars. Mila Kunis, Channing Tatum

From the streets of Chicago to the far-flung galaxies whirling through space, Jupiter Ascending tells the story of Jupiter Jones (Mila Kunis), who was born under a night sky, with signs predicting she was destined for great things.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 23% **Audience:** 49%

Drama

Seventh Son

Director. Sergey Bodrov

Stars. Jeff Bridges, Julianne Moore

In a time long past, an evil is about to be unleashed that will reignite the war between the forces of the supernatural and humankind once more. Master Gregory is a knight who had imprisoned the malevolently powerful witch, Mother Malkin, centuries ago. But now she has escaped and is seeking vengeance.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 10% **Audience:** 45%

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Jackman getting back to his Aussie roots in new role

Interview. Actor says using his native accent while filming Chappie was 'great but weird'

It's not that often that Hugh Jackman gets a role speaking in his native Australian, so while working on the upcoming sci-fi thriller Chappie he had to get reacquainted with the dialect.

The 46-year-old Tony Award winner said in an interview earlier this week that using his own accent "was great but weird."

"I had to practice it because it was way stronger than my natural accent," Jackman said.

Jackman also admits brushing up on some of the Australian slang that writer-director Neill Blomkamp wrote for the part.

"He used a lot of phrases, and I had to end up Googling the slang," Jackman said. "Neill was coming up with some really cool sayings ... I was trying to think of more, so I ended up Googling some of them."

Chappie, which opens in theatres on March 6, tells the story of a fallen police robot that is reprogrammed to think and feel for itself. Jackman said he had fun playing the film's antagonist, an engineer strongly opposed to artificial intelligence.

"We got to create this character that did stretch it a bit. We had a lot of fun with him from the look, his mannerism, the way he talked. At the same time, it was very much based in a reality that was needed for the movie in terms of the voice of caution," Jackman said.

Blomkamp is known for his sci-fi thrillers District 9 and Elysium.

The last time Jackman appeared in a film using his native accent was The Australian in 2008, opposite Nicole Kidman.

He did lend his voice to the 2012 animated film Rise of the Guardians.

Jackman, who just finished a Broadway run in the Jez Butterworth play The River, says he will hit the stage again next month.

"My one-man show I did here on Broadway a few years back, I'm going to do in Turkey. I'm very excited about that," he said.

He added: "It should be fun. We'll see how the Turks like it."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"He used a lot of phrases and I had to end up Googling the slang. Neill was coming up with some really cool sayings. ... I was trying to think of more."

Hugh Jackman on director Neill Blomkamp's use of Aussie slang in Chappie

Chappie opens in theatres March 6. CONTRIBUTED

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Documenting the every day dilemmas of vampires

Comedy. Jemaine Clement and Stuart Rutherford talk What We Do in the Shadows

The cast of What We Do in the Shadows. HANDOUT

Most people would probably balk — or move out — if a roommate asked to store a coffin in their room.

But Stuart Rutherford, an IT consultant from New Zealand, kindly obliged when his roommate Taika Waititi asked if he could keep a dusty casket next to his bed.

"I was like, 'Sure, but is there a dead body in it?' He was like, 'No, no, it's just an empty coffin,'" Rutherford recalled. "There were a couple days there where I was like, 'Where is this going?"'

It turned out Waititi, a comedian, and his friend Jemaine Clement were shooting a short mockumentary about vampires. It was 2005, before Clement would skyrocket to cult fame in North America with the HBO hit Flight of the Conchords.

When an actor called in sick, Rutherford stepped in to play a small role. Now, in the feature-length What We Do in the Shadows, opening Friday in select Canadian cities, Rutherford's role as a rosy-cheeked IT guy named Stuart was expanded.

The improvised comedy documents the everyday problems of undead flatmates Vladislav (Clement), Viago (Waititi) and Deacon (Jonathan Brugh) in Wellington, N.Z. — like old bones left on the floor, rivalries with werewolves, and freak sunshine accidents.

During last fall's Toronto International Film Festival, where What We Do in the Shadows won the People's Choice award for best entry in the Midnight Madness program, Clement and Rutherford sat down to chat with The Canadian Press.

How did the idea for a vampire mockumentary come about?

Clement: I wanted to do a vampire film because I had always been obsessed with vampires when I was a kid. And Taika wanted to do a mockumentary. Basically, we just put them together and thought they'd be a good fit because mockumentaries don't tend to go into the paranormal or into things that you can't really film.

Quoted

"I wanted to do a vampire film because I had always been obsessed with vampires when I was a kid."

jemaine Clement
Creator of What We Do in the Shadows

You actually went to bars in Wellington while dressed as vampires in both the 2005 short and the feature film. What happened?

Clement: In the first film, I think we were close to getting beaten up. We got called so many names — guys constantly shouting at us when we dressed like that going into town. But now, you can't get people to do it. We wrote it into the script thinking it was going to happen again, but people never did it. There is a kid who does it in the film. But we asked him, and he was like, 'No way, man, I'm not going to say that.' Attitudes have really changed in a good way.

What was it like shooting an improvised movie in which only Clement and Waititi knew what was in the script?

Clement: Sometimes people in the crew would let it slip. There was a vampire hunter but we didn't want him to know he was playing a vampire hunter. But the costume designer put his belt of stakes around him and we were like, 'Oh, now he's going to know.' But we kept everything secret from the cast so we could get some real reactions sometimes.

Rutherford: It was kind of like being in a weird game show where you don't know when it's going to end, you don't know if you're passing each test and then strange stuff happens and you just have to react.

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Falling in love with The Last Five Years

Jeremy Jordan GETTY IMAGES

Dream roles. As an aspiring musical theatre actor, Jeremy Jordan thought this cult work by Jason Robert Brown was the cat's pyjamas; now, he's starring in the film

Like everyone starting out in musical theatre, Jeremy Jordan had a song from The Last Five Years ready to go in his back pocket.

Jordan, the Tony Award-nominated star of Newsies: The Musical and TV's Smash, had fallen in love with the Jason Robert Brown musical when it premiered in 2002 and added one of its tunes to his audition list.

"It was like the bar. It was the apex. It was like the thing you strived for," he recalled. "If you could do justice to a song from The Last Five Years, then you were in good shape as a musical theatre actor."

Now Jordan has upped his game. He's gone from having one of its songs down pat to starring in the first-ever movie adaptation of Brown's cultishly adored song cycle about a young couple's falling in and out of love.

"It was fun because I knew it so well and I felt like I really connected to it when I first heard it and I still connected to it," Jordan said. "I got to share that love and connection with everybody else."

Jordan co-stars alongside Anna Kendrick in the 95-minute film, which has been adapted and directed by Richard LaGravenese and hits theatres and video on demand Friday after making its premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival.

It's the five-year love affair — told almost entirely in song — of aspiring actress Cathy and budding novelist Jamie, one on the rise and the other finding the going frustrating in mid-1990s New York.

Brown structured the story with a twist: Jamie starts at the beginning of the relationship and alternates songs with Cathy as he moves to the crushing end, while Cathy begins at the end and moves in reverse chronological order to the couple's sunny origin.

Quote

"It was like the bar. It was the apex. It was like the thing you strived for. If you could do justice to a song from The Last Five Years, then you were in good shape as a musical theatre actor."

Jeremy Jordan

While Brown had been approached about turning the musical into a film for years, no proposal really excited him until he spoke with LaGravenese, the writer and director of Beautiful Creatures and P.S. I Love You.

"I always thought it might make a nice movie, but I never really had a sense of what that movie was supposed to look like or anything like that," said Brown, who has a cameo as an audition pianist. "I'm very proud of it."

LaGravenese added some quirky, surreal touches and dance numbers to the heartbreaking naturalism of Brown's songs, and he made it modern with the use of Skype and cellphones. LaGravenese also pulled the theatrical piece into the world of film by having the young lovers in the same scene, even if only one was singing.

It was filmed over 2 1/2 weeks in New York during the sweltering summer of 2013 and maintained its intimacy by having 90 per cent of it sung live. Prerecording the songs and then lip-synching them for cameras weeks later wasn't an option.

"You write songs about moments that are special, that are particular, that are meaningful and that are impactful. Every moment in the film is one of those moments," said Jordan, who, during the song Moving Too Fast, actually bikes through the city while singing. (The soundtrack is available for download.)

Things got a little more real than the crew bargained for during a lunch break on the last week of filming when a thief opened the unlocked costume truck and made off with most of Jordan's clothes, including four pairs of expensive jeans cut specifically for Jordan.

"I was like, 'What are you going to do with a bunch of dude's clothes that are sized specifically to Jeremy Jordan's butt?'" he said, laughing. "I guess you have to find some very specific clients for that."

The finished film is something that Brown admits is still startling, even though the musical is done hundreds of times across the globe every year. His small, semi-autobiographical story is now on a huge screen, being sung by stars with enormous faces. "That part was an incredible head trip," Brown said, laughing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Kendrick's singing chops didn't surprise insiders

Musical roles. Anna co-stars in The Last Five Years, but her vocal prowess isn't news to those who've seen Into the Woods or Pitch Perfect

Anna Kendrick and Jeremy Jordan co-star in The Last Five Years. CONTRIBUTED

STEVE GOW
scene@metronews.ca

Ever since Anna Kendrick crooned the catchy single Cups in 2012's sleeper hit Pitch Perfect, she's become Hollywood's hottest rising singing star — subsequently starring in such big-screen musicals as Into the Woods and the upcoming Pitch Perfect 2.

The petite actor's unlikely vocal success may astonish some moviegoers, but it certainly didn't catch filmmaker Richard LaGravenese by surprise. "We cast her before Pitch came out, so we were really lucky," admitted the director of the indie musical The Last Five Years.

Based on the off-Broadway stage play by Jason Robert Brown, LaGravenese laughs in hindsight that it was a "gamble" to cast Kendrick at the time. "The deal with Jason was I would pick the actor because I needed actors who would be able to act and then he would tell me if they could sing," reflected LaGravenese with a laugh. "She was the first and only and (she) was perfect."

The film follows the passionate relationship between a struggling New York-based actress (Kendrick) and her quick-rising novelist boyfriend (Jeremy Jordan of TV's Smash) as they manoeuvre the ups, downs and possible demise of their romance.

"(Love stories) are difficult," admitted LaGravenese, who earned his reputation writing such lovesick stories as 2011's Water For Elephants and P.S. I Love You.

"The late (filmmaker) Sydney Pollack once said to me, 'Love stories are great up until they fall in love. Then after that, what do you do?' So my favourite love stories are the ones where people don't wind up together because, to me, relationships are really about finding out who you are."

Breaking bad habits

Germ warfare. Subtle daily tasks can make you more vulnerable to cold and flu viruses

HELEN RACANELLI
For Metro

That elevator button at your place of work or your apartment building harbours harmful bacteria. SHUTTERSTOCK

Good hand-washing is vital to avoiding colds and flu, but you might be surprised that some little bad habits might be exposing you to nasty germs.

Here are a few culprits that could be undermining your health.

Pressing elevator buttons

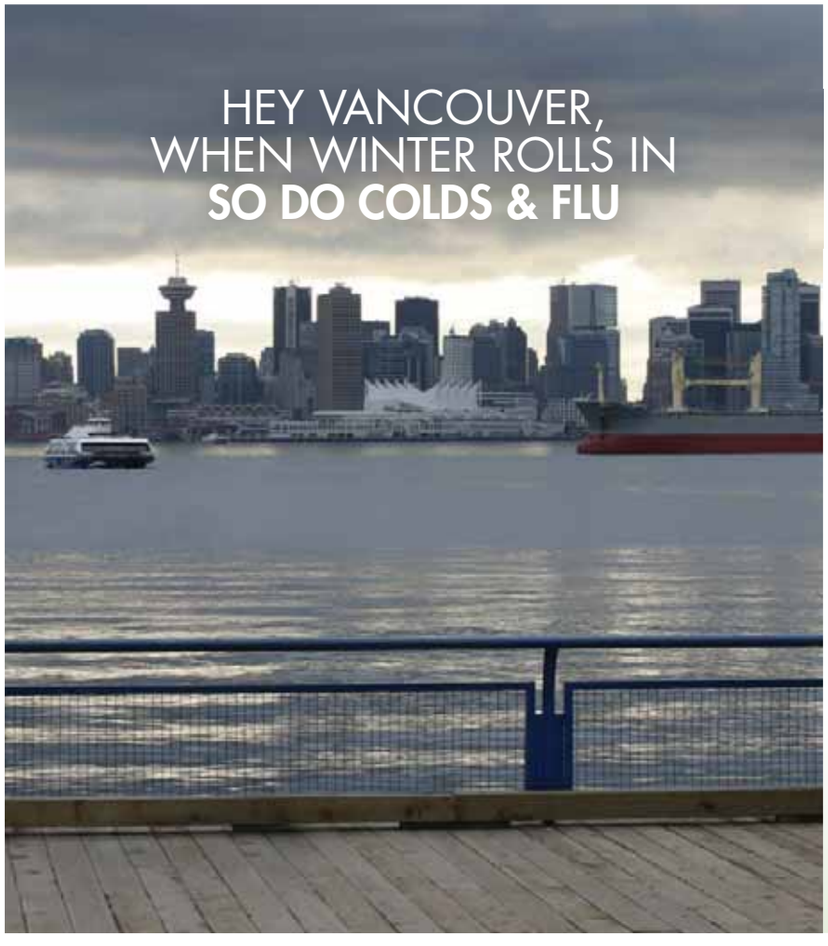
That elevator button at your place of work or your apartment building harbours harmful bacteria. According to a 2014 study in Open Medicine journal, 61 per cent of elevator buttons in three Toronto hospitals were colonized with bacteria. Toilets in the hospitals were also swabbed. You can probably guess where this is going: The toilet surfaces had significantly less bacteria than elevator buttons at 43 per cent. If you must touch the button with bare fingers, wash your hands after the elevator trip, or use your elbow, or even a pen cap to touch the buttons.

Being within six feet of someone with a cold

Although it may feel a bit rude, it's almost a natural instinct to edge away from someone sneezing or coughing rampantly. That instinct is correct and, actually, the distance you need is not only arm's length, it's further. Six feet, or two metres, is the proper distance to keep away from individuals infected with the flu and colds, according to public health officials.

Touching your face

Wiping crumbs off your lips, scratching your cheek or even resting a chin in your hand are all ways you are physically depositing germs near your mouth and nose. Chances are you touch your face many times in a day without even thinking twice about it. Public health experts say you should always wash your hands before touching your face. That's not always practical, so if you can't get to a sink, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Be sure to rub the sanitizer over the tips of your fingers, not just around the palms of your hands.



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Gossip

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METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Uma's got something to say about her chameleon complexion

We might be more used to Thurman's look below, but the actress says she's been a fan of the makeup-free face for years. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

So yeah, those photos of Uma Thurman on the red carpet earlier this week that got so much attention? She heard what you've been saying about them. Thurman stopped by the Today show for a chat and inevitably the online uproar around her new look came up. "I look weird," Thurman admits. "I guess nobody liked my makeup. I mean, I've been doing this for years and years and years, and people say things nice and they say things mean, and it's just like, whatever!"

And for anyone suggesting the new look might have something more to it than just a distinct lack of eye makeup, check out her Today show look, where it's back to the Thurman we all know and love. And she admits she'll likely not be rocking that shocking red carpet look again. "We saw how well the dark lipstick worked the other night," she joked.

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About that Blake Lively baby name...

So, early reports that Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds named their newborn daughter Violet have been thoroughly discredited, with Reynolds himself telling USA Today,

"No, that's not the name. I don't want to get into that, but I don't know where that came from." Got it. So then what is the little girl's name? And why are you being so weirdly secretive about it? It's just a name. And according to an anonymous source that's tipped off E! News, that name is actually James. Yes, a baby girl named James. Sure, why not?

Blake Lively GETTY IMAGES

Could Bruce be at fault for crash after all?

Bruce Jenner GETTY IMAGES

Police have not issued a statement on which driver is ultimately at fault for the four-car pileup last weekend involving Bruce Jenner that left one woman dead, but the lawyer for one of the drivers involved feels pretty strongly it was all Jenner's fault. Roger Simon, legal counsel for the driver of a Prius also involved in the crash, says the reluctant reality star is most definitely at fault — which, to be fair, isn't that much of a surprise. Honestly, what's he goinga to do? Call up the press and insist his own client is guilty? Simon disputes the official account of the incident, alleging in the L.A. Times that Jenner actually struck the white Lexus driven by the victim, Kim Howe, before continuing on to hit his client's car as well.

Ricardo is a Canadian chef, television host and author on a mission: To unite people through the pleasure of food. Discover his delicious and simple recipes every Friday — just in time for the weekend

Get on your lover's sweet side

This recipe serves two. COURTESY RICARDOCUISINE.COM

Valentine's Day. Chocolate Raspberry Crémeux For Two beats store-bought treats

RICARDO COOKS
Chef Ricardo
Ricardo Magazine

Although we hardly need an excuse to enjoy a decadent dessert, it seems fitting to whip up something extra-special for Valentine's Day.

Dark Chocolate Crémeux

1. In a bowl, combine the egg yolks and sugar with a whisk. Set aside.

2. In a saucepan, bring the cream to a boil. Remove from the heat and add the chocolate. Allow to melt for 1 minute and stir until smooth. Gradually pour into the egg mixture, stirring constantly.

3. Add the butter and stir until smooth. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

White Chocolate Cream

1. In a bowl, place the chocolate. Set aside.

2. In a small saucepan or microwave oven, bring the cream to a boil.

3. Pour hot cream over chocolate. Allow to melt for 1 minute and stir the mixture with a whisk until smooth. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.

Macerated Raspberries

1. In bowl, combine raspberries, sugar and liqueur. Allow to macerate for about 5 minutes.

Assembly

1. Whip white chocolate cream with an electric mixer until medium-soft peaks appear.

2. On a large plate for two, spread the white chocolate cream. Using two tablespoons dipped in warm water, form five to six mounds, each with about 3 tbsp of dark chocolate crémeux mixture. Place on the cream. Garnish with raspberries and serve with 2 spoons. **FOLLOW RICARDO ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ON RICARDOCUISINE.COM OR SUBSCRIBE TO HIS MAGAZINE'S ENGLISH EDITION, WHICH LAUNCHED IN 2014.**

Ingredients

Dark Chocolate Crémeux
- 3 egg yolks
- 1/4 cup (53 g) sugar
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) 35% cream
- 4 oz (115 g) dark chocolate, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp (28 g) unsalted butter, softened

White Chocolate Cream
- 1 oz (30 g) white chocolate, chopped
- 1/3 cup (75 ml) 35% cream

Macerated Raspberries
- 1/3 cup (42 g) raspberries
- 2 tsp sugar
- 2 tsp (10 ml) raspberry liqueur

Liquid Assets

Bring bubbles to Feb. 14

LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
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Roses are red, violets are blue, I'm having sparkling wine this Valentine's Day, how about you?

While I'm no poet, all you guys out there better take advantage of this Feb. 14 falling on a Saturday by bringing breakfast in bed to your significant other paired with a glass of something fresh and fizzy.

If expensive French champagne isn't in your snack bracket, pick up a bubbly made in the traditional method. The process developed in the Champagne region infuses wines with effervescence through a second fermentation in the bottle.

Most traditional method wines taste as close to champagne as you'll ever get for less than $20, with those from Spain identified as Cava leading the pack.

If you prefer your bubbles to be less obvious, look to Italian Prosecco.

Not as moussy as a typical sparkler, wines like La Marca Prosecco ($17.95 - $19.99) have taken the world by storm over the last few years thanks to their zippy acidity, creamy flavour trail and cocktail-esque personality. **PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**

Melt chocolate and hearts

1. In a bowl, combine 2 tbsp of cocoa powder and sugar. Butter six 1/2-cup (125 ml) ramekins and sprinkle with the cocoa and sugar mix. With rack in the middle position, preheat the oven to 375 F (190 C).

2. In bowl, sift together flour and 1/2 cup (50 g) of the cocoa powder. Set aside.

3. Over double boiler, melt the chocolate and butter. Let cool.

4. In another bowl, whisk the eggs with the sugar for about 4 minutes or until the mixture is light and fluffy.

5. With a spatula, fold in the flour and cocoa mixture. Add the chocolate and stir gently.

6. Pour half the batter into the ramekins. Place 1/6 of the white chocolate and a Bing cherry (or 2 morello cherries) in the centre of each ramekin. Top with the remaining batter.

7. Bake for about 16 minutes.

8. Let cool slightly, unmould and serve immediately. If serving is delayed, reheat cakes in the microwave oven. If desired, serve with fresh cherries half dipped in chocolate. **RICARDO**

This recipe makes four servings. COURTESY RICARDOCUISINE.COM

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp (13 g) cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp (26 g) sugar
- 1/2 cup (70 g) flour
- 1/2 cup (50 g) cocoa powder
- 8 oz (225 g) dark chocolate, chopped
- 1/4 cup (57 g) butter
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup (105 g) sugar

Filling
- 3 oz (90 g) white chocolate, chopped
- 6 canned Bing cherries, drained
- Icing sugar

PARIS IN 24 HOURS

Hidden gems in the City of Lights

Explore Paris through its neighbourhoods

Skip the Louvre and Eiffel Tower and explore the City of Lights the way it's meant to be explored: By wandering its neighbourhoods.

WHAT TO DO

Paris is divided into 20 arrondissements, or neighbourhoods, which have their own distinct identity. But unless you have weeks to spare, it's best to pick a few rather than try to see everything — you will quickly wear out the soles of your shoes.

The Marais, for example, is known as Old Paris, with some of the city's oldest buildings among its winding streets, but it's home to hip boutiques, cafés and art galleries. The Latin Quarter, on the left bank, is one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Paris with historical brasseries, while St. Germain-des-Pres, once a bohemian mecca, is now home to high-end shops and famous cafés, such as Café Flore and Les Deux Magots.

Well worth exploring is the neighbourhood of Montmartre, which sits on a hill overlooking Paris. You can get a sense of historic Paris as you wander away from the crowds at Place du Tertre and get lost in the steep, cobbled streets. Though it's crowded at night, it's worth sticking around to watch the sunset from Sacré-Coeur Basilica at the top of the hill, where you will hear the locals singing and strumming guitars.

Avoid famous Père Lachaise Cemetery and head to Montmartre Cemetery — a reprieve from the bustle of busy Paris streets — where you will walk in solitude along shady paths lined with maple and chestnut trees to find the graves of Edgar Degas and Alexandre Dumas.

If you aren't keen on getting lost in the streets of Paris, consider a walking tour. Paris Walks, for example, offers a range of options from Paris during the Second World War to Hemingway's Paris. Or try a chocolate-tasting tour, where you will be introduced to the city's top chocolatiers.

Instead of the Louvre, head to the Orangerie — a small, but stunning gallery that houses Claude Monet's the Nymphéas (Water Lilies) displayed in twin oval rooms. For more modern art, go on a graffiti-viewing tour along the Canal Saint-Martin, an up-and-coming neighbourhood with plenty of shops and restaurants.

WHERE TO EAT

The list of cafés, bistros and restaurants in Paris could fill the pages of a book, but a rule of thumb is to avoid places with an English-language sandwich board out front.

While in Paris, order the steak-frites (a Parisian staple) or, if you can handle raw meat, try the beef tartare. Some neighbourhood bistros serve up French classics in an affordable, casual atmosphere (such as Bistrot Paul Bert); look for a prix-fixe menu. Or splurge at a Michelin-starred restaurant, such as Guy Savoy.

If you are watching your waistline, Paris can be torture with its artisan boulangers, creperies and patisseries. It's hard to resist those chewy baguettes and melt-in-your-mouth pain au chocolate. Paris is also the capital of dark chocolate; look for single-sourced MOF chocolatiers (MOF is the highest ranking in the French culinary world).

In Paris, there's no need to eat all your meals in a restaurant — head to a cheese shop (try Laurent Dubois), pick up a bottle of wine and picnic in one of Paris's many parks, such as elegant Parc Monceau. Or head to the Rodin Museum, where you can enjoy a baguette on an outdoor terrace surrounded by rose gardens and Rodin's famous sculptures.

With so much to see and eat in its diverse arrondissements, Paris is worth a visit any time of year — and you will want to go back again and again.

Plan your Parisian getaway today and discover your own hidden gems. As Audrey Hepburn says in the classic film Sabrina, "Paris is always a good idea."

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Superman swoops into new Lions role

CFL. Geroy Simon rejoins Leos with aspirations of becoming a GM or president

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Geroy Simon has a new job. He starts Monday.

On Thursday, the B.C. Lions introduced Simon, otherwise known as Superman, to his new role, which will include working in both football operations and on the business side for the local CFL club.

After two years with the Saskatchewan Roughriders — one as a player when he won a Grey Cup in 2013 and the other as an ambassador and scout — Simon is coming back to the Lions, where he was revered in the community and one of Vancouver's most recognizable athletes.

Last summer, Simon, the CFL's all-time leading receiver, publicly stated he'd like to work his way into the role of general manager or president of a team within 10 years.

However, in order to reach the GM job one day, working first as a scout is a requirement to move up the ranks.

"To me, it's like anything — you've got to pay the price, you've got to go through the steps," said general manager Wally Buono.

On the football side, Simon's role will be to help Buono and director of football operations and player personnel Neil McEvoy, be involved with scouting in the United States and at the CIS level.

He'll also assist in the business aspect and with alumni relations.

"That's working towards being a GM and maybe even possibly a president," said Simon.

"For right now, I have those goals. I have that ambition to do that. But I'm just going to work my butt off now with the role that I have and see where it takes me."

Simon will also be part of the Leos' draft team.

"Geroy always had a pretty good eye for making an assessment on talent of individuals," said Buono.

Follow Cam Tucker on Twitter @camtucker_metro

Geroy Simon, right, pictured with B.C. Lions general manager Wally Buono, rejoined the team as a member of football operations and on the business side of the club. CAM TUCKER/METRO

Quoted

"To me, it's like anything, you've got to pay the price, you've got to go through the steps."

Lions general manager Wally Buono on Geroy Simon's path to becoming a GM or team president

NHL

Canucks look for consistency as they host Bruins

They're here. The Boston Bruins — remember them? — are in town to face the Vancouver Canucks.

The two teams meet Friday at Rogers Arena, with the Canucks looking to find some consistency in their game after beating the Chicago Blackhawks, needing overtime to do so, in a thriller on Wednesday.

Despite coughing up the lead, the Canucks showed, especially in the first two periods, they very well could be capable of playing against the league's best teams. Motivation has never been a problem for the Sedin twins, Daniel and Henrik, but they looked quicker, sharper with the puck against their old foes from Chicago. Their reward was the winning goal from Daniel Sedin.

Then again, the team's effort against the Minnesota Wild to begin the week could go a long way in dispelling that notion. The Canucks were again guilty of defensive breakdowns in yet another loss to a Western Conference team.

Yet, the Canucks, who picked up forward Brandon McMillan off waivers on Thursday, can ill afford such up and down performances.

They began Thursday with 63 points, third in the Pacific Division.

Their point total matched that of the Calgary Flames, the final wild-card team in the Western Conference that was in action against the L.A. Kings on Thursday.

CAM TUCKER/METRO

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MLB. Weeks in to make Seattle Mariners stronger

After making additions throughout the off-season, the Seattle Mariners had one more move before the start of spring training.

Former All-Star Rickie Weeks and the Seattle Mariners have agreed to a $2 million, one-year contract, according to a person with knowledge of the negotiations. The person spoke to The Associated Press on Thursday on condition of anonymity because the deal is pending a physical.

Weeks can earn another $2 million in performance bonuses plus additional award bonuses.

ESPN first reported the agreement. Weeks gives the Mariners additional versatility in the infield. In 121 games last season with Milwaukee, he hit .274 with eight home runs and 29 RBIs. He became a free agent after the Brewers voided his $11.5 million salary for 2015, a right the team had because Weeks failed to have at least 1,200 plate appearances in 2013-14, including 600 or more last year. The addition of Weeks gives Seattle another potential right-handed bat for the lineup.

Rickie Weeks GETTY IMAGES

Throughout his career with Milwaukee, Weeks has only played second base in the field and been a designated hitter a handful of time.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Lander leaves it late to boost Oilers

Anton Lander scored 1:47 into overtime to lift the Edmonton Oilers to a 4-3 comeback victory over the Montreal Canadiens on Thursday night. Matt Hendricks also scored for the Oilers (16-31-9), who are 2-2-0 so far on a six-game road trip that takes them to Ottawa and Winnipeg over four days. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Steen gives Tampa the Blues

Alexander Steen had a goal and two assists to help St. Louis coach Ken Hitchcock move into sole possession of fourth place on the NHL wins list in the Blues' 6-3 victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning on Thursday night. Hitchcock's 693rd regular-season win broke a tie with Dick Irvin.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bulls' Rose blossoms with 30 versus Cavs

No Love for Cleveland. James left with too much to do on his own as Chicago ran out easy victors

Pau Gasol and LeBron James were both voted into this Sunday's NBA all-star game in New York City.
CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/AP PHOTO

Derrick Rose scored 30 points, and the Chicago Bulls handed Cleveland just its second loss in 16 games, beating the Cavaliers 113-98 Thursday night.

Pau Gasol added 18 points and 10 rebounds. Tony Snell scored 22, helping offset a 31-point performance by LeBron James, and Bulls sent another strong signal that their recent struggles might be behind them.

They won their fourth straight after dropping 10 of 15 and entered the All-Star break with a 1-1/2-game lead in the Central division over the Cavaliers. Chicago led most of the way against the NBA's hottest team and pulled away in the fourth quarter.

Both teams were missing key players, with Chicago's Jimmy Butler nursing a strained right shoulder and Cleveland's Kevin Love out with an abrasion in his right eye. But the Bulls did enough to come out on top.

Rose was aggressive from the start, going right at the rim, and finished two points shy of his season high.

On Thursday

BULLS	CAVALIERS
113	98

Gasol posted his 14th straight double-double, the longest streak by a Bulls player since Michael Jordan's 15-game run in 1988-89.

Up by seven at halftime, the Bulls scored the first eight points of the third quarter to increase their lead to 63-48.

The Cavaliers made a run late in the period, closing within eight on James Jones' 3 in the closing seconds. But Rose drove left and cut between two defenders for a neat reverse layup just before the buzzer, drawing loud cheers from the crowd and sending Chicago to the fourth quarter with an 87-77 lead.

The Bulls led by as much as 15 in the first half and took a 55-48 edge to the locker room thanks to strong starts by Rose, Gasol and Gibson.

Rose was in attack mode early on, scoring 13 and playing turnover-free ball. Gasol added 12 points. Gibson scored 10 and the Bulls had 15 assists on 22 field goals.

James scored 12 in the half for Cleveland. But with Kyrie Irving hitting just 2 of 9 shots and Mozgov picking up three fouls, the Cavaliers had a tough time. The Bulls went on a 13-3 run in the second quarter, bumping their lead from 39-34 to 52-37 with just under four minutes remaining. Timofey Mozgov picked up his third foul going for a rebound with Taj Gibson and headed to the sideline during that stretch. Joakim Noah finished the run with a tip-in, making it a 15-point game.

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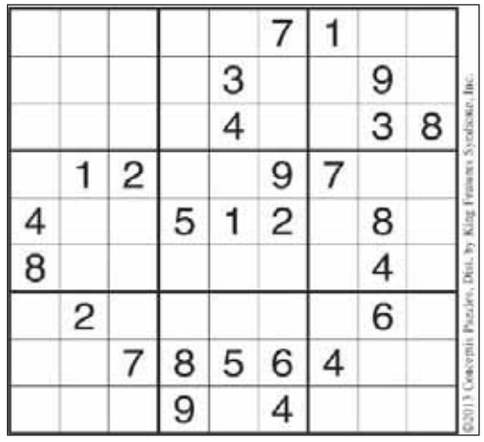
Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

8	4	6	5	9	7	1	2	3
7	3	9	8	2	1	4	5	6
5	2	1	3	4	6	7	8	9
9	5	8	6	7	3	2	4	1
4	6	7	9	1	2	8	3	5
3	1	2	4	5	8	6	9	7
1	7	3	2	8	5	9	6	4
6	8	4	7	3	9	5	1	2
2	9	5	1	6	4	3	7	8

See for yourself.

President's Choice FINANCIAL

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20

You will notice things today that people have overlooked. But don't expect many thanks when you point out what they have missed. Some people just do not want to be told anything.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21

You will see something to your advantage over the next 24 hours, something that can have a positive effect on your career. You will recognize it as soon as you see it.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21

Don't accept things just because the "experts" tell you they are true. All too often the "experts" are actually nothing of the sort.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23

Don't give up on something just because it does not seem to be working out the way you intended. That applies doubly if you have spent a lot of money on it. Give it time and you will eventually see a return on your investment.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23

It might be tempting to stick your nose in someone's business today but if you do you will likely regret it, especially if they know something about you that could be embarrassing.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23

Don't push yourself over the next 24 hours. Loved ones will happily share the burden of what you want done today, so spread the load. Work-wise, make this a day of planning.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

You will find it easy to forgive others' mistakes today but not so easy to forgive your own. You have set such high standards for yourself there are bound to be times when you cannot live up to them.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

Information will come your way today that makes you wonder if some of the things you have been led to believe are true. It may upset you to discover that you have been misled.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

One way or another you must get your message across. Hopefully people will stop what they are doing and listen but, if not, grab hold of them and yell at them. They will hear you.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

You seem to know just the right thing to say to get people on your side. Make that work in your favour today, especially when dealing with money. Your way with words could make you, and save you, a pile of cash

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

Now that Mercury, planet of the mind, is moving in your favour again your head should be full of ideas. Take the initiative and start something new.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20

If you need to be alone with your thoughts by all means go off on your own for a while. You don't have to make excuses to those who were hoping for the pleasure of your company. It's good to keep them wanting more.

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AUGMENTED REALITY

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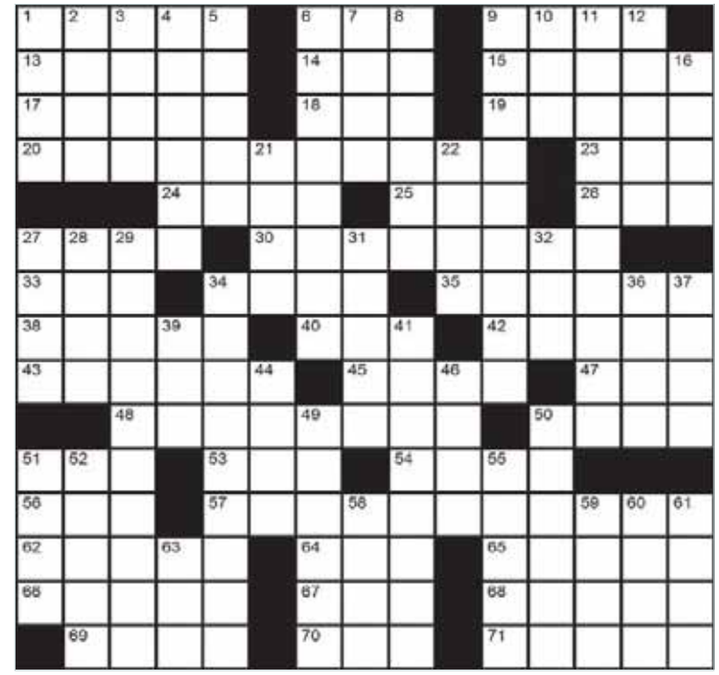
Yesterday's Crossword

Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across

1. "Cheers" character
6. Slangy put down
9. Church's vaulted part
13. Pantheon of Norse gods
14. Cousin on classic TV
15. Ringed and Harp
17. Fend, __ off
18. 'RCMP', e.g.
19. Birth a bovine
20. Shania Twain hit: 3 wds.
23. Neckwear
24. Texas city
25. Mr. Morrison
26. Sugar amt.
27. Goblins
30. Brewing company, __-Busch
33. Paddle
34. Ore deposit
35. Water down
38. "Oh __ _ Feeling": Hit for Hamilton band Crowbar
40. As written
42. Mr. Wilde
43. Freddy __ (Music bigwig who was Madonna's manager for several years)
45. Tibia's locale
47. Josh
48. Exaltee's elevation
50. Castaway's refuge
51. Deed
53. __-Cat (Ski hill machine)
54. Demeanor
56. Thames toilet
57. Non front-row-sitting person in Parliament
62. Thrust
64. Comparative suffix
65. Celebrity chef Guy
66. Ringo Who?
67. Neil Young's "I ___ Child"
68. "__ __ to Be You"
69. America's Maritime Guardian org.
70. Myrna of movies
71. Branch beds

Down

1. Wallet stuff
2. Actor Jared
3. "This __ __ unexpected surprise!"
4. Journalist's basic questions: wd. + li'l bit more
5. Norse goddess of love
6. "The Stroll" by Canadian quartet The __
7. Longing
8. Endeavoured
9. Space mission mystery on the CBC
10. The Princess and the __
11. Familiar sights on Winter roads: 2 wds.
12. Canadian skating great Mr. Stojko
16. Permeate
21. Flight-related UN Agency headquartered in Montreal [acronym]
22. Lucy Montgomery link (Canuck writer)
27. "__ you do that?"
28. South Dakota dam
29. National Basketball League of Canada team: wd. + li'l bit more
31. Professional thief's operation
32. Chicago trains
34. TSN: Canadian sports broadcaster Michael
36. Follow the car
37. Earth: German
39. __ kwon do
41. Denim-look shirt material
44. "99 Luftballons" by __
46. Eurythmics' "Would _ __ to You?"
49. Tea party, for one
50. Instigate
51. Shakespeare: __ Well That Ends Well
52. Jean __ (Quebec pharmacy chain)
55. Finally, in Montreal
58. Westerns: __ Sabe (The Lone Ranger, to Tonto)
59. Devious chuckles
60. 'E' in QED
61. Frees
63. RCMP's French acronym

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